

Sentencing Policy Study Committee

Minutes of meeting on October 9, 2003

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Rep. William Crawford
Sheila Hudson
Steve Johnson
Joseph Koenig
Sen. David Long
Hon. David Matsey
Todd McCormack
Luke Messer
Evelyn Ridley-Turner
Chief Justice Randall Shepard
Hon. James Williams

I. Call to Order

Sentencing Policy Study Committee Chair, Sen. David Long, called the meeting to order and introduced the Committee members present. Sen. Long stated that the purpose of this meeting was to become more educated about how community corrections work.

II. Background Information from Jim Hmurovich

Mr. Hmurovich stated that the purpose of his presentation was to provide basic information about community corrections and to provide reference materials concerning community corrections. Members of the committee asked about statistics relating to recidivism rates in Indiana. Randy Koester of DOC stated that the Department only keeps "recommit rates," which average around 30%. The Committee inquired about how community corrections are funded and evaluated. Commissioner Ridley-Turner stated that Mike Brown, DOC Director of Adult Community Corrections, could answer these questions. Mr. Brown explained the funding and evaluation processes.

III. Hendricks County Community Corrections; Todd McCormack

Mr. McCormack discussed the community corrections program in Hendricks County. Mr. McCormack's presentation followed a report that was given to members of the Committee. Although Mr. McCormack stated that Hendricks County was not an actual community corrections county due to financial reasons, he did discuss several issues relevant to community corrections in general including screening procedures, multi-county cooperation, and the need to increase the risks of offenders being caught. Mr. McCormack also discussed some of the different types of monitoring equipment available to community corrections programs. Several members of the Committee discussed and explained the charge-back provision, with Commissioner Ridley-Turner ending

the discussion by stating that in reality there are not many charge-backs. A discussion of the role that private providers do and should play with regards to community corrections was initiated and a request for more information about the topic was made by the Committee.

IV. Allen County Community Corrections; Sheila Hudson

Ms. Hudson discussed the community corrections program in Allen County. Ms. Hudson's presentation followed a report that was given to members of the Committee. Ms. Hudson specifically addressed forensic evaluation during the pre-sentence stages of a case and fielded questions from the Committee. Sen. Long ended Ms. Hudson's presentation by commenting that he had actually visited the Allen County community corrections program and was very impressed with it. Following Ms. Hudson's presentation, Sen. Long opened the floor to Pastor Ken Sullivan and Rudy Hightower of the Charity Christian Community Development Corporation. Pastor Sullivan and Mr. Hightower stated that their corporation trains ex-offenders in life and construction skills, but they were concerned that there were too many barriers to these types of programs. Sen. Long stated that the Committee will be looking at faith-based programs in the future and asked that the corporation be available for more comments in the future.

V. Lake County Community Corrections; Gary Paarlberg

Mr. Paarlberg discussed the community corrections program in Lake County. Rep. Crawford commended Lake County on the job that they do in community corrections, stating that whatever the county is doing, it needs to be further studied because it is working. A discussion of consistent, standardized rules for community corrections programs was had, with the Committee generally agreeing that such rules would be beneficial.

VI. Questions/Comments from Public

Carla Duffy, who works for AIM on juvenile re-entry programs, discussed the fact that there are no provisions for early release of class A felons from probation. Larry Hesson, from the Indiana Association of Counties, spoke against mandatory sentencing. Mr. Hesson felt that by not allowing mandatory sentences, the State could provide counties with more money for community corrections programs.

VII. Meeting Adjourned

Sen. Long confirmed that October 30, 2003, was the date of the next Committee meeting and thanked everyone for their testimony.